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The "Machine" Abolished and the People Restored to Power by the Organization of All the People on the Lines of Party Organization.

By CHARLES C. P. CLARK, M. D. Pp. 196. Price, \$1.00. New York : G. P. Putnam's Sons, 1900.

Many years ago, Dr. Clark diagnosed the disease of our body politic, but the New York Legislature refused to fill the prescription when his own city of Oswego wished to remedy the disorder. Consultation and research having confirmed his opinion, he here gives us in more detail both the scientific determination of the cause of the disturbance and a treatment for its correction.

Accepting the general principle of democracy, the author finds that the evil lies in the present method of general elections. The method, however, is at fault only in large constituencies, where it is necessary either to vote for the party nominees or to lose a vote.

Yet party organizations are universally necessary under existing conditions. To abolish the party, the conditions must be altered. The people must nominate those whom they elect. The citizens must be organized on natural lines as one body to centre their votes on men whom they know and whose duties they understand. The caucus and convention are the natural machines for the expression of the popular will. The fact that the parties, and not the people, control them is the true root of our political difficulties.

The failure of direct popular elections being attributed to three conditions, the treatment is designed to counteract (1) the actual and necessary ignorance of the great majority of voters both as to whom they are voting for and what they are voting about; (2) their utter inability to unite of and among themselves, upon representative candidates for office; and (3) the organizations of politicians who have become corrupt and corrupting masters.

The principle invoked is similar to that proposed before the constitutional convention of 1787, that the President be chosen by electors to be chosen by the people. It is the method of compound representation by which the members of the French constituent assembly of 1789 were elected. It is the electoral system on an extension plan. The primary caucus-chosen delegates, or their representatives, which now make but a preliminary, shall make the final choice of public officials. Nomination and election are to merge, and become synonymous. The primaries must be substituted for the polls. But there is to be only one primary for each precinct, at which all the voters are to assemble in actual and orderly conference, after the manner of the old New England town-meeting, to elect one delegated representative. Where these primary delegates are too numerous for free consultation, they must be assembled in district conventions and appoint

delegates of a higher grade to convene for the selection of men for office.

Among the peculiar features embodied in this plan are those limiting the tenure of office and the size and personnel of the primary caucus. Office-holders and delegates shall be removable at the will of the power that elected. The primaries are to be composed of equal numbers (say two hundred) of all the voters in a ward or township distributed among the precincts by lot, after the fashion of empaneling a jury. This lot-drawn constituency meets privately, elects its own officers and tellers, cannot be adjourned before a certain time, votes by ballot upon the calling of the roll, and elects a man not a member of the primary. By this general remedy we are to have less taxes, fewer elections, more concentration of authority in the people, greater official responsibility, an end of election frauds, the abolition of the "machine," and a better form of democracy.

The prognosis is too favorable. Party spirit will prevent such a consummation for an indefinite period. The fundamental reason for partisanship is that men differ in opinion. The treatment does not abolish the party. It should not. It aims at the party organization. Even here, the author admits that the full benefits are ultimate and not immediate. This relief must be accepted in the absence of speedier reform, yet the plan proposed offers no increased opportunity for the political education of the people. It does not solve the city problem. It does not actually increase either the power or the knowledge of the community. Only action and education can do that.

The possibilities of disproportionate representation as a result of the unessential feature of lot-drawn constituencies are so great that the American spirit is apt to prefer cheating, which may be stopped, to bad luck, which cannot be changed. The remedy, however would probably prove beneficial; it certainly offers more hope than any other single preparation in the political pharmacopœia. It will make an issue on men rather than on measures, and tend to put the right man in the right place. The success of the whole system depends upon the conduct of the primary caucus which may be controlled by a majority of its members. If the people rule not well, they may at least rule and have only themselves to blame.

CLAUDE L. ROTH.

Philadelphia.

A Century of American Diplomacy. By JOHN W. FOSTER. Pp. 497. Price, \$3.50. Boston: Houghton, Mifflin & Co., 1901.

Ex-Secretary of State John W. Foster has written a very interesting history of the hundred years of American diplomacy from 1776. The